



## **BYLAWS OF THE LATINO AND PUERTO RICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION**

### **Article I. The Commission**

#### **Section 1-Name of Commission**

The name of this Commission shall be the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission, hereinafter referred to as "the Commission" or "LPRAC".

#### **Section 2-Logo of the Commission**

The Logo of the Commission shall bear the name of the Commission both in English and Spanish with the state seal in both burgundy and green.

#### **Section 3-Office of the Commission**

The office of the Commission shall be at 18-20 Trinity Street, second Floor, in the City of Hartford, Connecticut, where all Commission records will be kept, or at such other place as the Commission may determine. The Commission may hold its meetings at such other place as it may designate.

### **Article II. Authorization**

#### **Section 1 - Authorization**

The Commission is authorized by § 2-120, as amended by Public Act 09-07 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

#### **Section 2 - State Agency**

For purposes of administration, the Commission is an agency of the State of Connecticut under the Legislative Management Committee of the General Assembly.

### **Article III. Duties**

#### **Section 1 - Statutory Duties**

The duties of the Commission shall be:



1. Focus its efforts on the following quality of life desired results for the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state:
  - a) That all members of the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state are healthy;
  - b) That all members of the Latino and Puerto Rican population are safe;
  - c) That all members of the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state achieve educational success;
  - d) That all members of the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state are economically self-sufficient; and
  - e) That all members of the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state are free from discrimination.

The commission shall meet regularly to review matters pertaining to the achievement of the desired results described in subparagraphs a) to e), inclusive, of this subdivision and, not later than January first, annually, shall submit a status report concerning such desired results to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of appropriations. The commission shall develop:

- i) Appropriate population-level indicators of the state's progress in achieving such desired results, and
  - ii) Strategies that are intended to improve progress on such indicators through a process that is inclusive of all relevant partners, including, but not limited to, state and local government agencies, the faith community, the business sector, nonprofit organizations, advocacy groups and philanthropic organizations;
- 2) Make recommendations to the General Assembly and the Governor for new or enhanced policies, programs and services that will foster progress in achieving the desired results described in subdivision 1) of this subsection;
- 3) Review and comment on any proposed state legislation or recommendations that may affect the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state and provide copies of any such comments to members of the General Assembly;
- 4) Advise the General Assembly and Governor concerning the coordination and administration of state programs that affect the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state;
- 5) Gather and maintain current information regarding the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state that can be used to better understand the status, condition and contributions of



such Latino and Puerto Rican population. Such information shall be included in the annual report described in subsection (d) of this section and shall be made available to legislators and other interested parties upon request;

- 6) Maintain a liaison between the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state and government agencies, including the General Assembly; and
- 7) Conduct educational and outreach activities intended to raise awareness of critical issues for the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state.

#### **Article IV. Membership**

##### **Section 1 - Regular Members**

The Commission shall consist of twenty-one members appointed in accordance with §§ 2-120b and 9-167a of the Connecticut General Statutes. The terms of the members shall be for two-year from February first in the year of their appointment, unless they are fulfilling the remainder portion of a member who resigned or was removed from the Commission.

##### **Section 2 - Responsibilities**

- a) Appointed Commission members shall:
- b) Attend all Commission meetings.
- c) Serve as an officer or working member of at least one standing committee.
- d) Participate in hearings called by the Commission.
- e) Represent the Commission as requested by public invitation with prior approval of the executive committee.

##### **Section 3 - Resignation**

Any person absent from (A) three consecutive meetings of the commission, or (B) fifty per cent of such meetings during any calendar year shall be deemed to have resigned from the commission, effective immediately.



#### Section 4 - Vacancy

Vacancies in the Commission membership shall be filled by the original appointing authority for the balance of the unexpired term, as set forth in §2-120b of the Connecticut General Statutes.

#### Section 5 - Expenses

Members shall receive no compensation for services, but shall be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

#### Section 6 – Removal of a Commissioner

If a Commissioner is involved in a inappropriate conduct at a committee or any board meeting (regular, special, or executive), or any other conduct unbecoming a Commissioner, he/she may be recommended for removal from the Commission by his/her appointing authority with cause upon resolution adopted by the Commission by a two-thirds vote of the total Commission membership present. Due process, including written notice and an opportunity to be heard, shall be observed whenever possible.

### **Article V. Officers, Nominations and Duties**

#### Section 1 - Officers

The officers of the Commission shall be a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

#### Section 2 - Chairperson

The Chairperson shall:

- (a) Preside at meetings.
- (b) Prepare the agenda conferring with committee chairpersons, the Executive Director, the Executive Committee and other members as appropriate.
- (c) Appoint committee chairpersons and assign members to committees, as directed by the Executive Committee.



- (d) Call special meetings.
- (e) Serve ex-officio without vote on all committees, except the Nominating Committee, and shall not serve as a committee chairperson, with the exception of the Executive Committee.
- (f) Assure that all approved orders, resolutions and policies of the Commission are followed and carried into effect.
- (g) Work with the Executive Director in planning and implementing Commission approved policy and action.
- (h) Is the official representative in disseminating approved decisions of the Commission.
- (i) Authorize press statements on approved Commission policy and action.
- (j) Maintain an effective working relationship with the Office of Legislative Management, including defining job responsibilities and goals for the Executive Director.
- (k) Notify appointed members who are at risk of submitting their mandatory resignation for non-compliance of article IV Section 3. As of the second absence of the regular meeting or committee meeting, notice will be sent forthwith with the assistance of the Commission secretary.
- (l) Perform any powers and duties approved by the Executive Committee and normally conferred by parliamentary usage.

### Section 3 - Vice Chairperson

The Vice-Chairperson shall:

- (a) Assist the Chairperson in the performance of their duties.
- (b) In case of absence, resignation, incapacity or death of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall perform such duties as are imposed on, and exercise such powers as are given to, the Chairperson, until such time as the Commission shall select a new Chairperson.

### Section 4 - Secretary



The Secretary shall:

- (a) Work with the staff secretary to assure accurate preparation of the Commission's official minutes.
- (b) Be knowledgeable of procedures and oversee the maintenance of committee reports, correspondence and other Commission records.
- (c) The Secretary shall work with the staff secretary to send notice of the regular and committee meetings to each member, along with the Chairperson's agenda, minutes of the preceding meeting and any other applicable information, to be distributed at least ten days in advance of the meeting date.
- (d) Assist the chairperson with compliance of Article V Sec. 2 (k).
- (e) In the absence of the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson at any meeting, the meeting shall be called to order by the Secretary, who shall call attention to such absence and act as the temporary Chairperson.

#### Section 5 - Treasurer

The Treasurer shall:

- a) Provide a monthly update of the Commission's expenditures and financial position based on the monthly budget report provided by the General Assembly Joint Committee on Legislative Management.
- b) Aid in preparation of timely documentation, presentation and explanation of the Commission's annual budget.
- c) Work together with the Executive Director in the preparation of the Commission's biennial budget to be submitted to the State legislature.

#### Section 6 - Nominations

At the regular meeting held in October, the Nominating Committee of no less than two members shall be elected by the Commission. Any member interested in running for an office may not serve on this committee and shall be disqualified from running for an officer position during that election cycle. It shall be the duty of this committee to nominate candidates for the offices to be filled at the annual regular meeting in November. The



Nominating Committee shall report at the regular meeting in November. Additional nominations from the floor shall be permitted at the November meeting but will be subject to vetting questionnaire.

#### Section 7 - Term

The commission shall elect a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, secretary and treasurer from among its members who shall each serve in such capacity for a period of two years and their term of office shall begin on December first. No member shall hold more than one office at a time, and no member shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

#### Section 8 - Vacancies

Should the office of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, or Treasurer become vacant, the Commission shall elect a successor from among its members at a regular or special meeting, and such election shall be for the unexpired term of said officer.

#### Section 9 - Removal of an Officer with Cause

If an officer of the Commission is unable to perform the duties of the office for an extended period of time (defined as more than two consecutive months), is involved in a physical fight at a committee or any board meeting (regular, special, executive), or any other conduct unbecoming a Commissioner the officer may be removed with cause upon resolution adopted by the Commission by a two-thirds vote of the total Commission membership present (except the officer, who shall not vote) at any regular or special meeting for which prior written notice of removal was given to all members. Due process, including written notice and an opportunity to be heard, shall be observed in accordance with Removal of an Officer with Cause Procedures, which are incorporated by reference.

### **Article VI. Meetings**

#### Section 1 - Annual Organizational Meetings

The regular meeting in November shall be known as the annual meeting and shall be for the purpose of electing officers every other year per the requirements of Article 5, section 7, receiving reports of officers and committees, and for any other business that may arise.

#### Section 2 - Regular Meetings



Regular meetings of the Commission shall be held on the third Wednesday of each month, except August for which there shall be no meeting, unless otherwise ordered by the Commission or the Executive Committee. The schedule of such meetings for each year shall be filed with the Secretary of State by the Chairperson or the Secretary no later than November 30 of the preceding year. The Secretary shall work with the staff secretary to send notice of the regular meetings to each member, along with the Chairperson's agenda, minutes of the preceding meeting and any other applicable information, to be mailed at least ten days in advance of the meeting date. At least three Commission meetings shall be held across the state as determined by vote during the legislative interim.

Public participation at the regular meeting will be welcomed with the expectation of 1 week prior notification to the LPRAC main office or by approval of the Executive Committee or by vote of the Commission. The time allotted for public participation is fifteen minutes including questions and answers or may be extended at the discretion of the Commission.

Cell phone use shall be prohibited during all meetings. Cell phones should be kept on silent mode or vibrate at all times, with the exception of commission members attending by electronic device as stipulated by article VI, section 8 of this bylaws.

### Section 3 - Special Meetings

The Chairperson shall, upon written request of twenty-five percent of the Commission, call a special meeting of the Commission for the purpose of transacting any business designated in the call. The notice of special meeting shall state the purpose of the special meeting, and shall be delivered to the usual place of abode of each member of the Commission at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the time of such meeting.

### Section 4 - Quorum

A quorum of the commission must be present at any annual, regular or special meeting in order for the commission to engage in formal decision-making. A quorum is defined as more 50% of the Commission members. In computing a quorum, vacant seats on the Commission shall not be counted. If a quorum is not present at any meeting, then those present can conduct the meeting, however all decisions are "pending" unless ratified by a quorum at a subsequent meeting, with the exception of commission members attending by electronic device as stipulated by article VI, section 8 of this bylaws.

### Section 5 - Voting





The Commission acts through recorded votes of members at duly called meetings. Motions are passed by a simple majority of those present and voting unless otherwise specified in these By-Laws (article VI, section 8).

#### Section 6 - Rules of Order

When no other law, Bylaw or rule exists to decide a question of parliamentary procedure, or when the applicable laws, Bylaws, or rules governing procedure are not clear or sufficiently specific, the latest edition of Robert's Rules of order shall apply.

#### Section 7 - Order of Business

The Order of Business at any regular meeting of the Commission shall be as follows:

1. Roll Call
2. Public Participation
3. Approval of minutes
4. Report of the Chairperson – *On Community Based Issues*
5. Report of the Executive Director – *On the Programs of the LPRAC*
6. Report of the Committees
7. New and old business
8. Adjournment

#### Section 8 – Attendance

Commission members are expected to attend all meetings, the Executive Director and Secretary are expected to attend all Commission annual, regular, and special meetings, unless the Commission, by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting, requests their absence. Other Commission staff shall attend meetings as requested by the Commission. Commission members will be considered present when attending by electronic device, such as a speakerphone. Otherwise, attendance by electronic device will be limited only two times in a calendar year and it will count for quorum and voting purposes.

#### Section 9 - Open Meetings

All annual, regular and special meetings of the Commission are open to the public, except when the Commission votes to hold an executive session. All Commission meetings shall be held in accordance with the requirements of the State of Connecticut's "Freedom of



Information Act," Connecticut General Statutes § 1-7 et seq.

## **Article VII. Executive Committee**

### **Section 1 - Membership**

The Commission Officers shall constitute the Executive Committee. The Executive Director is an ex-officio member without a vote on the Executive Committee.

### **Section 2 - Duties**

The Executive Committee shall conduct the business of the Commission as necessary between its regular meetings, set the hour and place of meetings, make recommendations to the membership, direct the Chairperson in assigning members to committees, and perform such other duties as are specified by the Commission. The Executive Committee shall be subject to the orders of the Commission, and none of its acts shall conflict with action taken by the Commission. The Executive Committee may delegate any of its duties to the Chairperson.

### **Section 3 - Meetings**

Unless otherwise ordered by the Executive Committee, regular meetings of the Executive Committee shall meet once a month. Special meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by the Chairperson, and shall be called within three days upon the written request of two members of the Executive Committee. The notice of Executive Committee meeting shall state the purpose of the special meeting, and shall be communicated in writing via mail, email or text message to each member of the Commission with reasonable notice hours prior to the time of such meeting.

### **Section 4 - Quorum**

Two members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum.

## **Article VIII. Standing Committees**

### **Section 1 - Standing Committees**

The Standing Committees are as follows:



(a) Priorities and Legislation

In conjunction with all other Commission committees, this committee shall investigate proposals in order to identify those which are consistent with the Commission's mandate and determine their priority for Commission action. Priority items are then referred to the appropriate committee to develop. The committee also determines what issues require legislative activity and develops a legislative agenda for the coming year. The committee shall present the Priorities and Legislative Agendas for approval by the Commission at its regular meeting in December. In addition, the committee shall conduct an on-going review of state and federal statutes and case law in order to identify the need for corrective legislation. It shall recommend to the Commission proposals for legislative action to be submitted to the appropriate legislative committees. The committee shall receive staff support from the Commission's Legislative Analyst.

(b) Public Information/Talent Bank

The committee shall prepare and disseminate information about the Commission to the media, the public, other state agencies, municipalities and various organizations. The committee shall prepare appropriate booklets and reports for distribution. The committee shall identify issues for public hearings, develop materials, invite speakers, and designate the date, time, and location of public hearings. It is the committee's responsibility to compile the Commission's annual report for review by the Executive Committee at its October meeting and approval by the Commission at its regular meeting in November. Such report to the General Assembly shall include the following information: (1) Identifies the quality of life desired results described herewith, (2) displays current trend data for the indicators related to each such desired result area, (3) identifies barriers to progress on such indicators, (4) identifies strategies developed pursuant to sections listed herewith (5) describes performance measures for the commission, including measures of research, education and outreach, and partnership development.

The committee shall assure the final printed annual report is available for distribution at the Commission's regular meeting in November and available for presentation to the Appropriations Committee of the General Assembly by January 1 of each year. The committee shall establish relationships with agencies and organizations advocating on behalf of Latino and Puerto Rican issues for presentation to the Commission. The committee shall maintain a Talent Bank containing resumes of qualified Latinos/as that are eligible for appointment to state boards, councils and



commissions, and annually will forward such resumes to appropriate appointing authorities for consideration. The committee will work with the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities on issues related to affirmative action. The committee shall receive staff support from the Commission's Special Project Director.

(c) Special Projects Committee

This committee will be responsible for coordinating, implementing of special events and projects approved by the Commission. The committee will provide the Commission with progress reports at its regular monthly meetings. This committee will maintain an effective working relationship with other committees as necessary to accomplish its action items. The committee shall receive staff support from the Commission's Special Project Coordinator.

(d) Results Based Accountability Committee

This committee shall meet regularly to review matters pertaining to the achievement of the following quality of life issues: (a) Health, (b) safety, (c) educational success, (d) economic self-sufficiency, and (e) discrimination. The committee shall receive staff support from the Commission's Special Projects Coordinator.

(e) Other Such Committees

Such other committees as the Chairperson and Executive Committee of the Commission shall from time to time deem necessary to execute the duties of the Commission.

Section 2 - Membership

Each committee shall consist of a chairperson and at least two additional members. In addition, the Chairperson shall serve ex officio without vote on all committees and shall not serve as chairperson of any committee.

Only Commission members may serve as voting members on committees. Committees may designate advisory commissioners without vote from the general public to assist in the committee's work. Such designation is made for no more than a one-year period at a time and expires at the Commission's next annual meeting.



### Section 3 - Appointment to Committee

The Chairperson of the Commission shall announce the membership of committees, each of which shall be chaired by a Commissioner. Any Commission member may request to join any committee. Commissioners shall have until the regular commission meeting of January to select two standing committees for participation. See article V Sec. 2 (C).

### Section 4 - Quorum

Two members of the standing committee shall constitute the quorum.

## **Article IX. Conflicts of Interest**

### Section 1 - Code of Ethics

Each member of the Commission and staff shall be subject to and obey the State of Connecticut's Code of Ethics, Connecticut General Statute § 1-84 and any other conflict of interest restrictions that may apply to Commission members and the staff. In the case of a conflict between applicable rules, the more stringent rules shall be followed.

### Section 2 - Disqualification

In the event that a member is disqualified pursuant to the code of ethics of State of Connecticut from acting with regard to any matter before the Commission, the Secretary shall enter such fact on the records of the Commission. In the event that the Chairperson is disqualified, the Vice Chairperson shall preside at the meeting.

### Section 3 - Conduct unbecoming of a Commissioner

Conduct unbecoming of Commissioners shall be referred to the executive committee for appropriate review and recommendation.

## **Article X. Amendments**

(1) These By-Laws may be amended at any special meeting of the Commission called for the purpose of amending bylaws by a two-thirds vote of those members present and voting, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting.

(2) Rules of Order and Procedures that the Commission shall adopt may be amended at any



regular meeting by two-thirds vote.

**Article XI. Languages**

The Commission will conduct its business using the English, Spanish and Portuguese languages.

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